

## Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10  
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06  
AID-05 CEQ-01 SOE-02 COME-00 EB-08 EPA-01 IO-13  
NSF-01 OES-07 DOE-11 INT-05 /115 W  
-----089236 181727Z /43

R 171755Z FEB 78  
FM AMEMBASSY ROME  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 716  
INFO AMCONSUL FLORENCE  
SETAF VICENZA  
CAMP DARBY LIVORNO

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E. O. 11652: N/A  
TAGS: MILI, IT  
SUBJ: CAMP DARBY CONSTRUCTION CRITICIZED

1. SUMMARY: ITALIAN PRESS HAS CRITICIZED  
A PROPOSED CONSTRUCTION PROJECT AT CAMP DARBY (NEAR  
LIVORNO). THOUGH ECOLOGY -- AND LOCAL POLITICS -- PLAY  
A ROLE IN THAT CRITICISM, ITS PRINCIPAL CUT IS THAT  
THE CONSTRUCTION IS DESIGNED TO CONCEAL THE TRANSPORT  
OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS. THE PRESS ARTICLES, THOUGH STUFFED WITH  
A FARRAGO OF SPECULATION, MAY INCREASE ITALIAN SUSPICION  
OF, AND LOWER THEIR SUPPORT FOR, OUR MILITARY  
INSTALLATIONS. END SUMMARY.

2. PLANS TO CONSTRUCT A SHORT WATERWAY SPUR LINKING  
CAMP DARBY TO THE NAVICELLI CANAL (THE CAMP'S ACCESS TO  
THE PORT OF LIVORNO) CAME UNDER FIRE FROM SEVERAL  
ITALIAN NEWSPAPERS ON FEB. 15 AND 16. ARTICLES  
IN THE FLORENCE "LA NAZIONE", MILAN "CORRIERE DELLA  
SERA", ROME "MESSAGGERO" AND COMMUNIST-CONTROLLED  
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"PAESE SERA" CRITICIZED THE ECOLOGICAL IMPACT OF  
THE PROJECT, AND CONJURED UP WHOLE-CLOTH SPECULATIONS  
ON THE "REAL" PURPOSE OF THE PROPOSED CONSTRUCTION.  
THE MOST DAMAGING SPECULATION WAS THAT CAMP DARBY  
IS TO BE USED AS A STORAGE DEPOT FOR NUCLEAR WAR-  
HEADS, WITH THE WATER SPUR TO PROVIDE THE BASE WITH  
AN "OFF-LIMITES" PORT TO UNLOAD THEM.

3. THE ARTICLES WERE OCCASIONED BY THE FEB. 15  
DECISION OF THE TUSCANY REGIONAL "GIUNTA" TO TURN  
DOWN THE PLANS. THAT DECISION WAS REPORTED AGAINST  
A CONFUSED AND CONFLICTING BACKGROUND OF WHO,  
LOCALLY, REGIONALLY AND NATIONALLY, HAS THE AUTHORITY  
TO APPROVE THE BUILDING OF THE 500 METER-LONG CHANNEL.  
IN THE WELTER OF LOCAL POLITICS THE SOCIALISTS QUERIED WHY THE  
COMMUNIST PARTY HAD NOT EARLIER DISCOVERED AND DENOUNCED WHAT THE  
AMERICANS WERE UP TO. ONE REGIONAL COUNCILMAN HAS ASKED THE  
REGIONAL GOVERNMENT TO HALT ALL CONSTRUCTION AT CAMP DARBY UNTIL  
AND INVESTIGATION OF WHAT IS HAPPENING AT THE BASE CAN BE UNDER-  
TAKEN.

4. COMMENT: THE NEWSPAPER REPORTS ARE AS TANGLED A  
WEB AS THE SITUATION THEY ATTEMPT TO EXPLAIN. THE  
REQUEST TO CONSTRUCT THE SHORT WATER SPUR IS NEITHER  
NEW NOR SECRET. THE PROPOSAL, UNDER A NATO INFRASTRUCTURE PROGRAM,  
HAD ALREADY RECEIVED A GO-AHEAD FROM THE TUSCAN REGIONAL PUBLIC  
WORKS COMMISSION WHICH MUST EVALUATE NEW CONSTRUCTION  
PROJECTS, BUT IS STILL HANGING FIRE IN THE  
MINISTRY OF DEFENSE WHICH OWNS THE LAND ON WHICH  
THE SPUR WOULD BE BUILT. ECOLOGICAL CONCERNS TILT  
WITH DEFENSE REQUIREMENTS AS CAMP DARBY IS SET IN  
AN EXTENSIVE PINE FOREST WHICH HAS RECENTLY BEEN  
DESIGNATED AS AN ECOLOGICAL PRESERVE.  
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5. THE FLURRY OF INTEREST IS UNLIKELY TO LAST LONG.  
IT WOULD NOT BE VERY IMPORTANT EXCEPT THAT IT HEIGHTENS  
ITALIAN SUSPICIONS OF OUR AND NATO MILITARY INSTALLATIONS  
IN THEIR COUNTRY. THESE ARTICLES FOLLOW HARD ON THE  
HEELS OF U.S. AIRPLANE'S INADVERTENT BOMBING ERROR  
IN SARDINIA WHICH MADE THIS WEEK'S NEWSPAPERS AS WELL. THOUGH  
BEREFT OF ANY LOGICAL CONNECTION, IT IS ALL TOO EASY  
TO LEAP FROM ONE TO THE OTHER, AND DECIDE THAT U.S.  
BASES, MISSIONS AND EXERCISES POSE A "GRAVE PERIL"  
TO PEOPLE'S SAFETY AND PEACE OF MIND.

6. TO FORESTALL ANY MORE EXAGGERATED REACTIONS AND  
TO PUNCTURE OVERBLOWN FANCIES AND FEARS, CAMP DARBY  
AUTHORITIES, TOGETHER WITH THE CONSULATE IN FLORENCE,  
PLAN TO HOST TOURS OF THE BASE FOR NEWSMEN AND  
LOCAL OFFICIALS. GARDNER

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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 jan 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
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**Concepts:** CONSTRUCTION, MILITARY BASES, ALLEGATIONS  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 17 feb 1978  
**Decaption Date:** 01 jan 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 20 Mar 2014  
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**Disposition History:** n/a  
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**Film Number:** D780076-0435  
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**Original Classification:** LIMITED OFFICIAL USE  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
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**Subject:** CAMP DARBY CONSTRUCTION CRITICIZED  
**TAGS:** MILI, IT  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
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